

Can Windows Save Energy?



In a typical house, over 40 percent of the annual energy budget is consumed by heating and cooling. Proper selection of windows, doors and skylights can significantly affect how much money we spend or save every year on keeping our homes bright and comfortable.

When you are spending hundreds or thousands of dollars on windows, doors or skylights, you need to get the most for your money. A great way to find the right products for your home is to look for the

ENERGY STAR symbol. ENERGY STAR-labeled windows, doors and skylights are twice as efficient as the average windows manufactured just ten years ago. These high-performing products can help cut your heating and cooling costs, make your home more comfortable, and help the environment, too. Here are some thoughts to consider when looking for an energy-efficient window.

What Features Make the ENERGY STAR® Window a Good Buy?

New materials, coatings, design and construction features, as well as other innovations, make ENERGY STAR-labeled windows a cost-effective investment. ENERGY STAR-labeled windows, doors and skylights are 40 percent more efficient than products required under the most common national building codes. This means you will be using less energy to heat and cool your home all year, resulting in lower utility bills. There are also environmental benefits associated with choosing ENERGY STAR-labeled windows and other products. Most energy is produced by burning fossil fuels in large power plants. When we use energy more efficiently in our homes and businesses, we also help reduce air pollution.



Getting More for Your Money

A Buyer's Guide to Energy-Efficient Windows, Doors and Skylights

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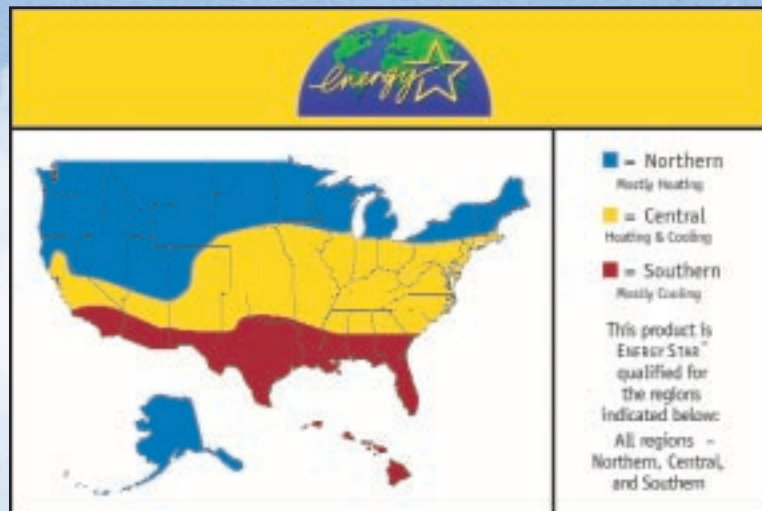
Will I Be Able to Find the Style and Type of Window I Want?

When choosing an ENERGY STAR window, door or skylight, you don't sacrifice comfort, versatility or style. These high-performing windows are available in the same operator types as non-ENERGY STAR products including single and double hung, casement, horizontal slider, fixed or picture, and patio slider. Additionally, they are manufactured with most common frame materials including aluminum, fiberglass, vinyl and wood.

What Other Advantages Can I Expect from an ENERGY STAR® Window?

Some home furnishings and decor can actually suffer a kind of sunburn when continuously exposed to too much daylight. The ultraviolet (UV) rays from the sun can cause fading and degradation of many materials and dyes found in upholstery, carpet, artwork, wood or paint. Low-e coated glass, found in many ENERGY STAR windows, can reduce harmful sun damage by up to 75 percent, giving greater protection to your interiors.

ENERGY STAR windows, by virtue of their design, eliminate draftiness and resist condensation for greater comfort. A well-insulated window also diminishes sound transmission.



How Can I Get the Most Energy-Efficient Product for My Climate?

ENERGY STAR performance requirements for windows, doors and skylights are tailored to fit the energy needs of the country's different climate regions – Southern, Northern and Central. The ENERGY STAR Climate Region Map gives you clear guidelines for determining which windows, doors and skylights will do the best job to help reduce heating and cooling costs in your region – and your home. To be sure, cross-check your window selection with the Climate Region Map on each ENERGY STAR label. Some ENERGY STAR-labeled windows may be best suited to just one climate region, while others may meet performance requirements for all three regions. In all cases, your decision is simplified – look for the ENERGY STAR label.

What is an NFRC Rating?

All ENERGY STAR-qualifying windows, doors and skylights also bear a label from the National Fenestration Rating Council (NFRC). NFRC provides unbiased energy performance ratings for windows, doors and skylights (or "fenestration"). Independent NFRC ratings provide the basis for

ENERGY STAR's window performance requirements.

NFRC's labels provide product-specific performance ratings for technical qualities such as U-factor (the rate of heat loss from your home through the window), and Solar Heat Gain Coefficient (how much heat your house gains from the sun as a result of the window's performance). Look for lower U-factor and appropriate SHGC numbers for the best performance in your area of the country.

Resources:

ENERGY STAR Hotline:
800-DOE-EREC
(800-363-3732)

ENERGY STAR Website:
<http://www.energystar.gov>

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